CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 17 June 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I declare open the 654th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

As the President of the Conference is out of town on official mission, in accordance with rule 10 of the rules of procedure I have the honour today of replacing him in his duties.

I have on the list of speakers of today the representatives of Malta and Cuba, and I give the floor to the representative of Malta, Mr. Valentino.

Mr. VALENTINO (Malta): Mr. President, allow me to begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of this Conference and to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and support. I wish you every success during your term as President of the Conference.

In my intervention today I would like to refer briefly to three aspects particularly - those related to the strengthening of the non-proliferation Treaty, transparency in armaments and the chemical weapons Convention.

The year 1995 will be an important year for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, an instrument which is vital for international peace, international security and overall global economic progress in the world. The effectiveness of the non-proliferation Treaty is seen as a universal treaty that impedes the spread of nuclear weapons and sets the mechanism for general and complete disarmament. The preparatory process for the 1995 review and extension conference of the non-proliferation Treaty should be an opportunity for States parties to redouble their efforts in attaining the objectives of non-proliferation and strengthen the non-proliferation Treaty. It is our view that the non-proliferation Treaty should be extended indefinitely, and that at the 1995 extension conference commitments be made by the nuclear Powers to reduce further their nuclear weapons and for non-nuclear Powers not to acquire these weapons. The nuclear-weapon States have the main responsibility for strengthening the non-proliferation Treaty and in the light of the Clinton-Yeltsin declaration take the opportunity to negotiate with urgency and in good faith a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Such a process would definitely facilitate in a positive manner the outcome of the 1995 non-proliferation Treaty conference. Banning tests will not guarantee that proliferation can be prevented. However, a test-ban treaty will help reduce incentives for proliferation.

Malta, a non-nuclear-weapon State, is equally interested in the pursuit of disarmament and its implications. With all other nations, we urge those States with military arsenals to intensify their efforts towards reduction of armaments and to build mutual confidence and trust which is the basis of this process. Such nations possessing military arsenals, be they nuclear or conventional, should keep in mind that the impact and the size of such arsenals remains a threat to the security of other States.

(Mr. Valentino, Malta)

A step forward in disarmament is a step forward for humanity. For those States not possessing nuclear weapons, adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty signifies in itself an act of faith in the implementation of the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter. We strongly believe that all United Nations Member States have an obligation to humanity not to shake this faith.

At the last General Assembly, Malta welcomed regional development in the field of disarmament, including the ratification by the Government of DPRK of the safeguards agreement with IAEA, as well as the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula made on 31 December 1991. This step forward was, however, reversed rather abruptly by the announcement by North Korea to withdraw from the NPT, which comes at a time when efforts are being made to strengthen the NPT. Malta would like to join other countries in urging the Government of the DPRK to reconsider its decision to withdraw from the NPT. In the meantime we take note with satisfaction of the outcome of the United States and the DPRK talks held recently in New York on this particular issue.

The chemical weapons Convention is a milestone towards general and complete disarmament, since it provides for the total elimination of a whole category of weapons of mass destruction. Progress has been made in the two preparatory commissions held in The Hague, and by the end of this year most of the work accomplished by the PrepCom will definitely advance the process for most States signatories to ratify the Convention at an early date. The threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is still real and with us, and the success of the preparatory phase for the entry into force of this Convention is determined by the participation of a large number of States signatories, including those which possess such weapons. We still remain concerned about the non-adherence of a number of States, particularly those from our region, to the chemical weapons Convention. The chemical weapons Convention remains in our view a standard instrument which could be a model instrument to other disarmament issues which the Conference on Disarmament has the potential to exploit as a negotiating body.

The third issue I wish to address is transparency in armaments and the arms register. With the ending of the cold war, increased importance had to be made on the need to control the transfer of conventional arms, particularly for those regions of tension and instability. At last year's session of the Conference on Disarmament, a new item was introduced as part of the agenda of the Conference on transparency in armaments, and this year we have rightly established an Ad Hoc Committee on this issue.

The establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, of which Malta in the 1960s was the original initiator at the United Nations General Assembly, was an important step to control international arms trade. In conformity with my Government's policy and objectives, at the forty-seventh United Nations General Assembly, Malta was co-sponsor of the resolution on

(Mr. Valentino, Malta)

transparency in armaments, which was adopted without a vote. In accordance with the provisions of this resolution, Malta has submitted its report. We urge others who have not yet done so to submit their reports. We need to build confidence to enhance transparency and, as stated by other delegations, hope that the Conference on Disarmament at its current session will provide a stimulus on this item. My delegation looks forward to further deliberations on this item. Although this item has been discussed recently within the Conference on Disarmament, it will be further examined in the future prior to the 1994 expert group which will have the task of studying the operation of the first phase of the Register and provide guidance for its expansion and further development. Needless to say, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments is a timely and encouraging measure which will create the right ambiance for effective and concrete advancement in this specific area.

New challenges and opportunities are presenting themselves. Transparency in armaments is one of the most important items in which this year the Conference on Disarmament has an important role to play. Transparency in armaments would complement other discussions and negotiations taking place in other forums, including CSCE. My delegation hopes that the political will shown in the establishment of this and other measures will be enhanced and strengthened.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Malta for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba, Mrs. Bauta Solés.

Mrs. BAUTA SOLES (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Allow me first of all to congratulate you on the excellent work that Ambassador Leon and his delegation have performed in discharging the duties relating to the office of President of the Conference on Disarmament. In doing so I have in mind the excellent state of the relations our two countries have traditionally maintained.

I have asked for the floor this morning in order to read a statement by the Group of 21. I will read it in English. It deals with the subject of transparency in armaments, and reads as follows.

Last 4 March, the CD listened to a proposal by the United States on a data exchange exercise regarding the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. On 22 March, during an Ad Hoc Committee meeting on TIA, the G.21 set forth its position regarding the said proposal in the following statement read out by the Group Coordinator:

"Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Group of 21, I wish to make the following statement:

(Mrs. Bauta Solés, Cuba)

"The Group held a brief meeting today during the short break, to focus on the matters before us. It is the position of the members of the G.21 that given the importance of the proposal just made, the Group needs time to reflect upon the matter."

On 25 March, the CD took up the issue for consideration during an informal plenary meeting. On that occasion the G.21 Coordinator made the following statement:

"Mr. President, as Coordinator of G.21, I think it is my duty to report to this informal meeting the position of the G.21 on the matter under reference.

"Immediately after the matter was taken up in the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA last Monday (22 March 1993), the G.21 held a brief meeting to focus on many other matters including the proposal made by the United States.

"Subsequently my Ambassador, as mandated by the G.21, informed the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA that given the importance of this matter, members of the G.21 concluded that they need time to reflect upon it. I conveyed this position to the Presidential corsultations yesterday (24 March 1993). Since then, there is no change to the position of members of the G.21."

That same day, the CD formal plenary was not able to recommend the proposal for consideration.

Since the G.21 statements, while not addressing the substance of the proposal, are also relevant to the decision taken, the Group requested the inclusion of the above-quoted statements in document CD/TIA/INF.2, since that document is an Ad Hoc Committee document and bears the general title of "Statements made in the Conference on Disarmament during the first part of its 1993 session on agenda item 8: Transparency in armaments."

The Group regrets that its statements have been omitted from the above-mentioned compilation and deplores that the request for their inclusion, which was in keeping with standard practice of the Ad Hoc Committee and the CD, has been formally opposed in the Ad Hoc Committee.

The G.21 finds opposition to its request unprecedented and unacceptable. Ad hoc committees are the instances where most of the delegations' positions are stated and, therefore, even though no formal PVs are kept, tapes and other records of the work exist; they are the sources from which stated positions can be drawn.

It is regrettable that delegations be required to repeat their statements in formal CD plenary before they are duly reflected in CD documents and reports. In the Group's view, this development undermines Ad Hoc Committee standard practice and can entail needless complications for all in the future.

(Mrs. Bauta Solés, Cuba)

The G.21 formally requests that the present statement be circulated as a CD official document and, at the same time, asks for the inclusion of its statements of 22 and 25 March 1993, quoted above, in a revised version of CD/TIA/INF.2, i.e. Revision 1.

The G.21 regrets the time consumed in resolving this problem in the CD plenary, which would have been avoided had the standard practice been duly observed.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Cuba for her statement and for the kind words she addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): First of all I should like to place on record the appreciation of the delegation of Mexico for the way in which your delegation has been discharging the tasks of President of the Conference for these past four weeks.

When the history of multilateral efforts for the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is written, we will have to examine dozens and dozens of files in order to facilitate this examination of what we hope will be the final phase of these efforts by the international community, and in view of its indisputable interest for the members of the Conference on Disarmament, the delegation of Mexico has requested the secretariat to distribute as an official document of the Conference the text of a letter dated 14 June 1993 which the forty-third Pugwash Conference sent to the President of the United States on the question of nuclear testing. As you know, the Pugwash Conference was held recently in Sweden.

My delegation would also like to suggest that the Conference on Disarmament should continue the consideration in an informal meeting, and in the presence of the observers, of the draft declaration contained in document CD/1200/Rev.1 of 11 June. As you know, this text was revised in the light of the discussions that we held in the Conference in an informal meeting on 9 June.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. The document mentioned by him has been received and will be circulated.

It has been proposed by the Mexican representative that the CD should hold an informal meeting to discuss document CD/1200/Rev.1 submitted by the Group of 21. Under rule 19 of the rules of procedure of the CD, the holding of such an informal meeting requires a consensus on the part of the CD. Does anyone wish to express an opinion on the holding of such an informal meeting? Please allow me to add that the Group of 21 has expressed the view that the informal meeting should be held after the conclusion of today's plenary. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Mr. President, let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency. My delegation would wish to consider this proposal before agreeing to it and, therefore, we would see some difficulty about having the meeting immediately after this plenary.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Obviously we understand that delegations might require more time to consider documents and proposals, but I would like to point out that it has been more than a week now since the original text was submitted, and the revised version has been available since 11 June, in other words for six days now. So with all due respect, my delegation thinks that there has been sufficient time for examining the text which, as I said, was revised in the light of our discussions here on 9 June.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I am afraid I am somewhat confused. At the Presidential consultations yesterday, which unfortunately I was not able to attend myself, I understand that the representative of the G.21 said that the Group had not at that stage decided on what they wished the Conference to do with this statement; whether it was indeed intended to be a statement by the G.21 or a draft of a statement to be made by the Conference. As I understand it, this was to be considered further by the G.21, so this strengthens my view that we do need time to consider this matter.

Mr. FELICIO (Brazil): Mr. President, I am glad to see you chairing this meeting and I would like to convey to your delegation the thanks of the delegation of Brazil for the efficient manner in which you are conducting our work.

I take the floor in the first place to support the proposal by the Ambassador of Mexico that we continue consideration in informal plenaries of the proposal made by the G.21 of a draft decision by this Conference calling upon ourselves to negotiate in an expeditious manner a nuclear-test-ban treaty. This was the sense of the proposal as far as I can recall.

I also take the floor to thank you for having proposed to us that non-member delegates participate in the informal plenary. I think this is a wise proposal and in this way you are asking us in a collective manner to decide upon an important question. I congratulate you on this also.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the expectation of my Government that the Conference on Disarmament decides expeditiously to take this decision which is reiterated by many countries in this forum, in the United Nations and elsewhere, that we should negotiate as fast as possible a nuclear-test-ban treaty.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I'm afraid my bewilderment increases. This is now being described as a draft decision. The paper before us talks of a draft statement. I think this confirms the report I was given of the discussion yesterday, when no one seems to be clear what it is that is proposed. Until there is a clear explanation of what is proposed, we cannot get instructions on it. As things stand, as I made clear a week ago when we last had these discussions, my delegation would not be able to go along with a decision or a statement containing these sentiments.

Mr. QUIROS (Peru) (translated from Spanish): My delegation, too, wishes to express its appreciation for the very able way in which the Ambassador of China and the delegation of China have been guiding the work over the past four weeks. I have taken the floor because yesterday my delegation participated in the Presidential consultations on the sixth floor, in its capacity as the delegation that will be coordinating the work of the Group of 21 as from next Monday. Unfortunately, no doubt for important reasons, our coordinator until this Friday, the Ambassador of Zaire, is not in the room, but I would like to say that in the consultations yesterday the delegation of the United Kingdom raised the question of whether document CD/1200/Rev.1 referred to a draft statement that would be made by the Group of 21 on its own behalf, or whether this was a proposal of the Group of 21 for a Conference on Disarmament statement. The Ambassador of Zaire yesterday - regrettably there was no simultaneous interpretation - spoke in French and made it clear - and since he is not here I will take the opportunity to do so - that this was a proposal by the Group of 21 for a statement by this body, the Conference on Disarmament. So my colleague from Brazil, no doubt through a slip of the tongue, referred to a draft decision. In short, it is a draft statement being proposed by the Group of 21 in order that, if there is consensus, it will be made by the Conference on Disarmament, and I would be grateful if the Ambassador of the United Kingdom could pass on this message to his Group, could discuss it and then as soon as possible we might be able to have an informal plenary to discuss it.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Peru for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. From the discussion we have just had, at present it appears we have no consensus on this issue. I will continue to hold consultations on the matter, and also invite the incoming President to participate in the relevant consultations. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): As far as I know, in order to hold an informal meeting on a given subject, it is not necessary for there to be consensus on that subject. This is why they are informal. What we are asking for, and we repeat this now, is an informal meeting to discuss the content of the text of the statement that is to be found in CD/1200/Rev.1, and we have asked for this meeting to be held now, after this plenary meeting, and in the presence of the observers. I wonder whether there is any objection to this proposal.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement. The distinguished representative of Mexico raises the issue of whether the holding of an informal meeting today to discuss document CD/1200/Rev.1 can be the subject of consensus, and I would like to hear views from delegations. I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mrs. BAUTA SOLES (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Those familiar with the Conference on Disarmament know that very often we are bound by precedent. On 25 March last, in this room, a proposal was put before the Conference, and some delegations asked for the proposal to be considered in informal consultations. The same view, but as a contrary request, that is, that the proposal in question needed further thought and therefore it was not possible at this time at least to hold an informal meeting, was expressed by other delegations, including my own, leading to a situation which clearly demonstrated that there was no consensus in the room for the holding of informal consultations. Now we are in the same situation. Despite that, the informal consultations were in fact held on the 25th. Now we are in the same situation, but in reverse, in a certain sense. We might say that there is a group of delegations, those that suggested last time that there was no consensus on the substance to allow the informal consultations, which are now asking for informal consultations, and those who at that time insisted that despite the fact that there was no consensus we should have informal consultations, are now saying that there is no consensus in order, in this case, to follow a similar path. Anyway, what my delegation wishes to say is that there is a precedent, and if we are going to follow the precedents, it is not essential for this forum, at this moment, and if we are to follow the precedent set on 25 March last, this forum would not require consensus in this room just as it did not require a consensus on 25 March last in order to adopt the solution of informal consultations. Everything I have said here is to be found in the proceedings and records of this Conference, so that I do not understand how we can act in an ambivalent manner with regard to this procedure at this moment. What is involved in any event, something I think that will redound to the benefit of the Conference, is to sit down to discuss a proposal and try to see whether there is an area of common ground on which we can all achieve a compromise which will satisfy us. Obviously, if we do not hold the discussion we are not going to achieve any final result, which, ultimately, in view of the flexibility shown, even extending to changes in the original text, might benefit us and satisfy us all. Therefore my delegation would also be inclined to favour respecting the precedent set on 25 March last, in which, despite the express opposition of delegations here that asked for more time to analyse the substantive proposal that had been put before us, we held actual informal consultations in this case. I have ventured to refer to this precedent because my delegation is concerned at the disorganized way in which we seem to be tending to proceed in this room.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I should be clear. I am not objecting to holding an informal meeting at some stage on this, though we have already had one, or indeed effectively two, informal meetings on the subject from which it became clear, and the President drew the conclusion, that there was no consensus, and I am

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

afraid that remains the case, but there is certainly no possibility of there being consensus if we are not given time to consider the new document, and for me at any rate it is new - I only saw it for the first time this morning; I'm surprised that it has been around for six days. My problem is compounded by the fact that according to the record which I have been given of yesterday's Presidential consultations, the President concluded that the matter would be discussed further once the G.21 had decided what they wanted to do with the paper and after Groups had been informed, and it was on that basis that I did not attempt to get any instructions before this meeting, and I think it is only reasonable that we should be given a chance, if there are important changes - I don't immediately see them, and my guess is that I am going to continue to have difficulty with this text - but if I am to try to get instructions on it, then we need time and I don't think I will be the only delegation in that position.

Mr. HOFFMAN (Germany): First of all, let me congratulate the Chinese delegation on the able way they have led us in our deliberations.

I am really curious as to where this document has been these last six days. I saw it only yesterday afternoon and I made it available immediately to the capital, but I am in the same position as my United Kingdom colleague. I have no instructions on this. I am not opposed to holding an informal meeting where I can listen but not participate; I have no problem with this. My problem is one of the basic question as to whether we need consensus for an informal meeting or not. I don't think that we had a precedent on 25 March where we changed our rules of procedure. In our rules it says clearly in rule 19 that arrangements such as informal meetings can be agreed by the Conference, and agreement, of course, is under rule 18 by consensus. I don't think we have changed this on 25 March I'm afraid, so if there is no consensus in this room on holding an informal meeting, I'm afraid we will not have one - this is my reading.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Germany for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. From the discussion it appears that no one objects to the holding of an informal meeting, but there are different ideas as to when the meeting should be held. If it is agreeable to all, the President will consult with the incoming President concerning when an informal meeting shall be held to discuss document CD/1200/Rev.1, and hopes that we can reach an agreement. I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

Mr. KOIKAI (Kenya): Mr. President, my delegation would also like to join all those other delegations that have warmly congratulated your delegation on the very able manner in which you have been conducting the work of this Conference during your presidency.

We have been discussing a very important issue, and the question of timing on the discussion of this paper has been at issue during this morning's discussion and my delegation, being a member of the Group of 21, would have desired that we hold an informal meeting this morning, but as it has been revealed from the discussion, this will not be possible. I would therefore

(Mr. Koikai, Kenya)

like to propose, Mr. President - in spite of the fact that you have stated you and the incoming President will hold consultations on the most appropriate time to have a discussion on this paper - I would like to propose that such an informal meeting could be held after the next plenary meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 22 June. I am sure that all delegations that have not had instructions from their capitals might receive such instructions, and we could deal with this matter expeditiously on Tuesday.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Kenya for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. PEREZ-VILLANUEVA (Spain) (translated from Spanish): My congratulations to you and your delegation on taking up the presidency of the Conference, and my offer of unlimited cooperation to the extent that I can be of help. Two points very briefly. I would like to thank you and the delegations of Mexico and Brazil expressly and formally for the wish you have expressed to set up an arrangement for addressing this matter that is before us at the moment, an arrangement which would allow my delegation to attend a discussion which is of great interest to it. And in the second place, the second point is that I hope that whatever decision is taken regarding the time and format of the meeting, whatever decision is taken by the Conference in this plenary for dealing with this topic, I hope that it will enable my delegation to attend.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Spain for his statement. The distinguished delegate has made a concrete suggestion - that after the next plenary, that is to say after next Tuesday's plenary, an informal plenary should be held to discuss document CD/1200/Rev.1. The President would like to hear suggestions from delegates. There are no other suggestions.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): Another related issue is that of the participation of non-members in the informal meeting to be held next Tuesday. From the discussions it appears that there is no opposition to their participation. So may I take it that we have decided on the matter?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I now give the floor to the Secretary-General to make a statement.

Mr. BERASATEGUI (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations) (translated from Spanish): Since several delegations have taken the floor today in Spanish, I will follow their example, since it is of course one of the official languages of the Conference. I have briefly asked for the floor to clarify a point which is raised in the statement read out today by the representative of Cuba on half of the Group of 21. In that statement

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reference is made to the fact that that Group regrets that the statements referred to have been left out of the compilation prepared by the secretariat. I would like to refer to this last matter in order to dispel any misunderstanding that may arise in this regard.

As I have explained in the past to the distinguished representative of Cuba, I think it was last week, the long-standing practice of the secretariat has been not to include in compilations statements that are made in informal meetings without the agreement of the body concerned, whatever the body may be, and this practice that has been followed, as I say, for a long time now has a very simple explanation to it. It is in fact the only way of reflecting accurately in a compilation the official statements of delegations which are to be found in the records of the Conference, or, alternatively, those statements which the members of the Conference designate as such as a result of agreement in the body concerned.

I must say in this regard that the tapes of the meetings of subsidiary bodies are not of guaranteed accuracy. In the first place, they are taken only from the English interpretation booth, because of the economic constraints that have been in effect in the secretariat since 1986, and although I am of course the first to say that the Conference has the best interpreters not only in the Palais des Nations but I think in the whole of Europe, it is a fact that there may be differences of emphasis in the interpretation of certain statements, which consequently might not be properly rendered. A second reason is that, if statements made in informal meetings are to be reflected, what then will happen with statements made in very informal consultation meetings that are held among delegations, for which we in the secretariat have no record?

The third problem we have faced in the secretariat is that the equipment may not be completely reliable, and we have had various cases of gaps in the tape recordings of meetings of the Conference, and this occurred not long ago on one occasion in connection with a plenary meeting. Of course these tape recordings help the secretariat in preparing certain draft reports. We did so for items 2 and 3 in the past, and also for the reports of the subsidiary bodies. But the difference is that these reports are subject to the formal approval - I must emphasize this point - the formal approval of the members of the Conference. This is not the case for a simple compilation. In addition, the statements in the draft reports submitted to the subsidiary bodies are not verbatim statements, as is the case for a compilation.

I would like to say that there is no record in the Conference of a compilation containing informal statements, unless the body concerned stipulates that it has no objection to including them. I would like to refer to one case, one of the most recent compilations that the secretariat has prepared at the request of the Conference. In April 1990 the secretariat circulated a compilation of proposals concerning the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. In that compilation the secretariat added only

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those statements that were to be found in official documents. At a later meeting on the subject, the Conference agreed expressly to include the informal statements in the compilation, and accordingly the secretariat produced a Revision 1 that was subsequently considered by a further meeting of the Conference. Obviously, had there been agreement in the subsidiary body on the inclusion of the statements to which reference was made by the distinguished representative of Cuba, the secretariat would have done that straight away.

In pursuance of the statement that the Group has just made, the secretariat is now going to produce a new document which will contain the statements that have been referred to by the distinguished representative of Cuba. In doing so, however, I would like to clarify one point. I must say that although this point is not covered in the statement by the Group of 21, a series of statements have been made in plenary on this very subject since 25 March, which was the deadline for the compilation. But very recently we have also had two heads of State, one of them belonging to a member country of the Group of 21, and a Minister for Foreign Affairs, who have referred to this subject, and it would be logical for these statements to be included in the new document. I hope that this suggestion will be acceptable.

To conclude, I would also like to say that the secretariat is going to circulate again the list of measures relating to documentation that is to be found in a statement made by my predecessor on 10 April 1986, which was adopted by the Conference in an informal meeting on 22 April of the same year. You will remember that this document containing the list of measures is drawn to the attention of the delegations each year. My predecessor did so from 1987 onwards, and I did the same this year.

Mrs. BAUTA SOLES (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): First of all, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the clarification he has just provided to the Conference and at the same time I would like to make a few clarifications of my own. It is true that I had occasion to talk to the Secretary-General about the matter in question, not in my capacity as representative of Cuba but in my capacity as Coordinator of the Group of 21 for transparency in armaments. It is true that my country's position appears in the compilation that the secretariat was kind enough to prepare, and has done so from the outset. The second point I wish to mention is that while I appreciate the clarity of the observations made by the Secretary-General, I also wish to place on record that it was not exactly opposition on the part of the secretariat which led to the non-inclusion of the Group of 21's statements in the compilation prepared in the Ad Hoc Committee. However, we accept as sound the clarifications which the Secretary-General deemed relevant to provide. Since I had occasion to talk to our distinguished Secretary-General about this matter, I have also had the responsibility of explaining in detail to the Group of 21 the points he made to me concerning the documentation situation. Despite this, the Group on the basis of its knowledge of and experience in the Conference on Disarmament, decided to draft the statement

(Mr. Bauta Solés, Cuba)

that I read out. Lastly, I think there is a need to take into account the proposal made by the secretariat, whereby the Revision 2 proposed by the Group of 21 would include subsequent statements on the transparency issue made by other speakers, and you may be sure, Mr. President, that this suggestion, which I am sure will be duly endorsed by certain member delegations of the Conference, will be considered by the Group of 21 with a view to taking a decision.

Mr. GROSSI (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): This morning is certainly one for procedural discussions, and as a result my delegation has also decided to join the various interventions which we have had on procedural issues. We listened with great interest to the clarification provided by the Secretary-General on the matter at issue, raised by the Group of 21's statement on the question of the compilation relating to item 8 on our agenda, Transparency in armaments, and the Secretary-General was kind enough to mention that in the intervening period that falls in between the interval encompassing that compilation and today, several statements have been made, including some by heads of State and naturally including the statement made by the President of my country, who referred in a part of his address before this body to the question of transparency in armaments. Of course, my delegation believes that the suggestion made by the Secretary-General is pertinent, useful, and also recalls that the position of the Argentine Republic was also expressed at the level of the head of my delegation in the first part of this session in the compilation, so that I consider this suggestion to be a useful and constructive suggestion. I would just like to say that the title of the compilation will therefore have to be changed, because the original title referred to statements made in the first part of the session, and the Group of 21 referred to that. Now I think we will have a broader document and one that will also embrace the second part.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement.

May I now turn to another subject? I am pleased to report to you that the consultations held for some time now on the dates for the third part of the annual session have led to an agreement which I reported at the Presidential consultations which took place yesterday. As this is a matter subject to a decision by the Conference, I shall now report to you, for decision, the following arrangement. First of all, the opening date will be moved from Monday, 19 July to Monday, 26 July. Second, the closing date will be Friday, 3 September instead of Thursday, 2 September. Third, the presidency of Cuba, which was to conclude originally on Sunday, 8 August, will now end on Tuesday, 10 August, and that of Egypt will begin the following day. By this arrangement the presidency of Cuba will regain the plenary meeting lost by the postponement of the opening date, by chairing the plenary meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 10 August. There will be two additional working days for the Cuban presidency, which will partly compensate for the five working days lost at the beginning of the third part of the session. For its part, Egypt will regain the plenary meeting lost on Tuesday, 10 August by the addition of a plenary meeting which will be the last of the annual session, on 3 September. It will also regain one of the two working days which will now

(The President)

be part of the Cuban presidency. This arrangement is acceptable to the two delegations providing the presidency during the third part of the annual session. I hope that it is also acceptable to all of you. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference agrees to the proposal that I am now making.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I shall now turn to the informal paper circulated by the secretariat, containing the timetable of meetings to be held next week by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and may be changed if necessary. On that understanding I suggest we adopt this timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Chinese): I should now like to make a statement as the presidency of China approaches its end.

As you know, the presidency of China concludes this week. At this juncture, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to all the delegations participating in the work of the Conference for their assistance and cooperation during the Chinese presidency. During the past four weeks the President of the Argentine Republic, His Excellency Carlos Menem, the President of Romania, His Excellency Ion Iliescu, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, His Excellency Johann Jørgen Holst, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, His Excellency Pieter Kooijmans, came to address this Conference. In addition, the Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister of China, Mr. Qian Qichen, also sent a message to this Conference. All this not only provides us with inspiration and encouragement but also manifests the great importance and expectation the international community places on this Conference.

Please allow me to take this opportunity to ask the representative of Cuba to convey to Ambassador José Pérez Novoa, the incoming President of the Conference, our best wishes for success in his new responsibilities, which I am sure he will discharge in an exceptional manner because of his well-known experience and diplomatic competence.

I would also like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Vicente Berasategui, the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, and his very able staff, including the interpreters and translators, for their diligence and invaluable assistance.

That concludes our work for today, and I shall now adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 22 June at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.